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DOES RUSSIA REPRESENT ARYAN CIVILIZATION?

BY KARL BLIND.

I.

FOR the purpose of putting Europe on the wrong scent, Russian statecraft, in its dealings with Japan, has sought to raise the bugbear of the "Yellow Peril." Yet, the very first successes of the Japanese on sea were jubilantly celebrated, as far away as the United States, by Polish emigrants who belong to a white race—and more truly so than many of the Muscovites themselves?

The Poles in Russia, as well as various other nationalities within the overgrown Empire of the Czar, would certainly show similar signs of joy, if they had not the horrors of Siberia, of Blagovetchensk, and of Kischineff before their minds' eyes. When they read, on the outbreak of the war, in the *Novoe Vremya*, the cynical avowal that "Russia, in beginning and continuing negotiations with Japan, had only one intelligible object in view—namely, to gain time, and to take advantage of the time for getting her army and her fleet into readiness," the feelings of Poles, of Finns, of Armenians, of inhabitants of the Baltic Provinces, and other downtrodden populations, may be easily imagined. It is true that the fleet and the army of the would-be aggressor were

not ready when Japan at last struck a blow in defence. Despotism, as is so often the case, had had inefficient or faithless servants.

Under these circumstances, Muscovite diplomacy, driven hard by the first issues of the armed encounter which it had hoped to delay yet for a while, exerts itself to enlist sympathies by assuming the part of "Champion of the Aryan Race." In France, where there is such an enormous number of holders of Russian bonds, pens have easily been found for writing up the "Yellow Peril" and denouncing the "Pan-Mongolism" of the Kingdom of the Rising Sun.

The efforts of those writers were somewhat awkwardly supported by a not very clever and rather incongruous argument of a prominent adherent of the Russian policy. He declared that Manchuria must be retained by Russia, and still further Mongol territory be annexed to her, because she herself contains already so many peoples of Mongol—that is, yellow—kinship! It is an argument we have heard before. It was used on the occasion of the inroad made by the Cossacks upon Afghanistan, in 1886, when a good bit of the territory of the Ameer was torn away and added to the Czar's Empire. The Russian plea brought forward at the time was, that the Turcomans inhabiting a portion of Afghanistan were of the same race as the Turcomans whom Russia had already conquered in the neighboring Khanate. Hence the Afghan Turcomans were also to be laid hold of!

Who can say, if this ethnological game were to go on, what limits there could be to it at all? It is literally a plea for the universal dominion of Russia in Asia.

However, the Russian annexationist writer before alluded to was quite right in avowing that there is much Mongolism in Russia herself. In saying so, he unwittingly let two cats out of his bag. Ethnologists are well aware that his assertion is true in an even far larger sense than he meant to convey.

Polish writers on race questions, such as Duchinski, have often protested against the claim of the St. Petersburg Government to be a Slav Power, and to be entitled, therefore, to assume the leadership over the various Slav nations outside the Autocrat's dominions. The Poles say—and their statement cannot historically be denied—that, when the Russian Kingdom was founded, in the ninth century, by a conquering Warangian clan of Scandinavian and other Germanic warriors (Swedes, Norwegians, An-

gles, and Goths), under Rurik (Roderick), the great plain was mainly peopled, in the north, by Ugrian, Finnish, and Tatar tribes, kindred to the Turanian or Mongol stock. Only here and there, towards the west, did a sprinkling of Slav tribes exist. The Slavonization in speech of that non-Aryan racial element was but slowly carried out in the course of many centuries.

It is now many years ago, when a bitter controversy raged between Poles and Muscovite Panславists, that I received a closely written letter of fifteen pages from Duchinski, in which he contended with all his might against Russian hegemony over the Slavs. In these days, the French writer, Delamarre, seconded him by writings of his own. All this seems at present to be curiously forgotten—more especially in France, where there are still so many worshippers of the strange alliance between the Phrygian cap and the knout.

Historically speaking, there dwelt immediately east of Moscow, a people of non-Aryan origin and non-Slav language, for hundreds of years after the establishment of the Russian Kingdom. Catharine II., in a well-known ukase, acknowledged the fact that the inhabitants of real Muscovy were of a different descent from the Russians. The very name of Russia, I may add, is clearly proved to have been given to the country by the conquering Germanic Warangians. It is not a Slav, but a Germanic, Norse word. It was applied to the country in the same way as Gaul was called Frankland, or France, by the conquering Teutonic tribe of that name.

When the Warangians founded the Russian Kingdom in the ninth century, a Turkish nation, the Khazars, had an empire of their own in what is now southern Russia. Mongol by origin, they adopted partly the Mohammedan, partly the Jewish, creed, and had many flourishing cities with a culture of Byzantine connection. This Turkish nation was gradually overthrown by the Warangians and their Finno-Slav retainers. The blood of the Khazars, however, became mixed with that of their conquerors. So we have, here again, a Tatar element added to the ancient non-Aryan, Finnish, population of Russia.

II.

Originally Ugro-Finnish and Tatar, and but slightly Slav, in the north, the peoples in Russia had scarcely time to become

amalgamated, when there came, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, the terrible invasion of the Mongol "Golden Horde."

Russia, weakened by internal feuds among the descendants of Rurik, and by a territorial splitting-up into small principalities, was conquered by Batu, a grandson of Jenghiz Khan. It remained under the yoke of the Golden Horde for nearly 250 years. Politically, and partly even racially, the populations of the great plain, which in the east and the southeast of European Russia had remained Tatar even before the irruption of this enormous Mongol wave, now became doubly Mongolized. As a sign of subjection, the Grand-Princes of Muscovy had for centuries to make their annual obeisance to the Great-Khan, into whose camp they had to travel, and to whom they were compelled to present, on their knees, a cup of mare's milk. In customs and manners, as well as in institutions, Russia was thus fully changed, between the thirteenth and the end of the fifteenth century, into an Asiatic dependency.

Mainly through internal quarrels, which broke out, at last, among the Golden Horde itself, the country was slowly relieved from this Mongol dominion. On the ruins of the latter, Czardom arose, as a continuation, so to say, of the despotic rule of the Khans. For a long while Tatardom characterized the policy of the Czars. With the aid of Tatar auxiliaries, Ivan the Terrible conquered the free city of Novgorod, which had in the mean time grown up, and had formed a connection with the German Hansa.

The remnants of Tatar dominion in what is now southern Russia were only overthrown under Catharine II. But, even to this day, both in the southeast and in the northeast of European Russia, Tatar and other kindred races still partly dwell. Not a few Cossack tribes are mixed with them. Farther east, in Asia, we come again upon non-Aryan populations in Siberia, as well as upon Kalmucks, Bashkirs, and so forth—all of Turanian, Mongolic, yellow affinity.

And yet we are told that Russia is the Champion of the Aryan Race against the "Yellow Peril!"

III.

I have stated all this with no invidious racial purpose, but simply as historical and ethnological facts. What has been men-

tioned about the Turk nation of the Khazars, shows that culture is not the privilege of a white race only. The Moors in Spain might be cited also in this connection.

It is little known, but a positive fact, that Verestschagin, the famed Russian painter who found his untimely end in the terrible "Petrovavlovsk" disaster, had Tatar blood in his veins, from the mother's side. When I met him—during his first visit to England for the purpose of exhibiting his striking pictures concerning the horrors of war—I did not observe this strain of Tatar kinship in his face or figure at all. Nor had he the appearance of a typical Russian, but rather that of a man of Germanic origin; for instance, of a Swede. He is said to have hailed from an old noble family; and this, in Russia, often means a descent from the early Norse founders of the Russian Kingdom. For all that, even he had a Tatar strain in his body composition.

Those who talk about the "Yellow Danger" might take note of this twofold racial origin of the great artist, who was also a good and humane man. The very names of many Russians prove a similar affinity with non-Slav, Tatar, Mongolian races. Bashkirtseff, Tatarcheff, Alikhanoff, Sibiriakoff, and numerous other names, point that way significantly enough.

All I wished to show is, that, with such facts before us, the Russian Government has the least claim to the part of Defender of the Aryan Race and of European Culture.

The hollowness of the assertion of writers who would fain denounce all non-Aryan races as natural enemies of European culture, could not be more clearly proved than by a reference to the treatment of Finland by the present Autocrat. The Finns do not belong to the Aryan stock. They are of Ugrian, in other words, of Turanian, blood, with which the Turks and the Tatars have some kinship. Only on the sea-coasts of Finland is there a Swedish, Germanic, admixture through the former political link with the Scandinavian Kingdom on the other side of the Gulf, which was robbed of its eastern possession by Muscovite aggression. The speech of the Finns is non-Aryan, even as is that of the Magyars in Hungary, the kinsmen of the Turks.

Now, like the Magyars, who are the political mainstay of the Hungarian Kingdom,—and, it may be added, like the modern Japanese,—the Finns are given to the cult of parliamentary institutions. The Finnish nation in general is more highly cultured

than the mass of the Russian peasantry. But what does the St. Petersburg Government, the professed champion of European culture, do? Unmindful of his sworn oath, the text of which can be seen in every church of Finland near the altar, Nicholas II. has laid violent hands on the rights and liberties of that cultured people; thus acting, not like the constitutional ruler, which by public law he is in the grand-duchy of Finland, but like a tyrant of some Mongol Khanate. Yet he is to shield Europe, according to ignorant or interested writers, against the peril of Pan-Mongolism! Could hypocrisy further go?

It is an imaginary danger, this bugbear of Pan-Mongolism. The real danger is, the aim of Czarism, or of that military and bureaucratic ring which surrounds and often controls it, a universal dominion in Asia—to be followed by a similar attempt in Europe.

Yet those would gravely err who think that the Russian nation at large could be made answerable for that baneful ambition. A St. Petersburg letter, written a few days before the "Petropavlovsk" disaster, contains this assertion:

"In this present war, there is not a trace of patriotic enthusiasm among the people; on the contrary, the masses are perfectly apathetic, not understanding in the least the occurrences in the Far East, whilst the cultured part of the population is directly hostile to the Government policy in Manchuria."

Lest this statement should be doubted, I will give specimens of Russian press utterances in an even stronger sense. They are all the more characteristic, considering under what difficulties of censorship they were published. From the beginning, periodicals, like the moderately progressive "*Westnik Evropy*," were averse to Government procedures. It said:

"Our national honor by no means demands that we should definitely annex Manchuria. Moreover, the economic condition of Russia in no wise permits her to take upon herself the heavy burden of sacrificing, year by year, many millions of roubles for the sake of maintaining order in a Chinese province. The two Manchurian railway lines have cost already about 500,000,000 roubles; and if that part which belongs to the Siberian line cannot be given away, this may very well be done with the other line. It was a mistake to connect the coast territory (the province of Vladivostok) with the Siberian railway through a foreign country, seeing that the coast territory not only does not bring in any profit, but

had to be subventioned in a previous decade, from the Exchequer, with 150,000,000 roubles. Russian commerce in the Far East is utterly insignificant, and has no prospects whatever of being increased."

It would lead too far to give more extracts from that prominent periodical. Be it only still said that the "*Westnik Europy*" denies the possibility of Russian competition, in the Far East, with the merchandise of England, America and Japan, in spite of the high tariff imposed by Government. Says the "*Westnik Europy*":

"People in that part of the world, being dissatisfied with the inferior Russian produce, still continue as customers of the countries mentioned. Our own commercial policy in Manchuria has merely the effect of creating a race of *chevaliers d'industrie*, who have already been nicknamed 'Manchurians,' and who, supported by the so-called patriotic press, exert themselves very successfully to get money from the State Exchequer into their own pockets. The sounding phrases about Russia's greatness and glory are simply a mask for the purpose of getting quickly rich at the expense of Russia."

Severe as these strictures are, they were still exceeded by those in the more advanced periodical, "*Russkoje Bogotstwo*." In its opinion, "the whole of Corea and Manchuria are not worth the life of a single Russian soldier." Even Prince Uchtomsky, who for some time was an intimate personal friend of the Czar, whose travels, during which he had accompanied the Czar, he described in a book, had said in a series of articles, the conclusion of which was published after the beginning of the war, that the best policy for Russia in Asia was a peaceable one. "Assuming the case," he wrote, "that we defeat Japan. In that case, China would *de facto* become a Russian province. But how should we then accomplish the task of administering, and finally assimilating, a country whose population is three times as numerous as our own?" Certainly, such statements are a strange commentary on Russian governmental policy; and who knows what tone they would assume if great defeats were to come?

IV.

The far-reaching aims of Russian policy in Asia may be gathered from a curious conversation the English ambassador at St. Petersburg had, in 1881, with the representative of the Foreign Office there.

A report of it is contained in a despatch to Earl Granville, dated July 27. Its contents are characteristic of the ironical manner the diplomatists of St. Petersburg often adopt for covering a serious intention of theirs.

It is within the remembrance of older men that, in their earlier years, Russia had not penetrated much beyond the Caspian Sea. Now this is what in July, 1881, the English ambassador wrote:

"With reference to my despatches of the 20th instant, I have the honor to report for your Lordship's (Earl Granville's) information, that I asked Baron Jomini to-day (M. de Giers being absent from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs), if he could give me an idea of what the territory was, which was termed 'Trans-Caspian.' His Excellency replied that it was '*All the territory beyond the Caspian.*' 'But,' I said, 'can you give me no idea as to where it ends?' To which he said that he *could not.*"

I think such a mocking answer should have been met by a strong warning hint in calm, yet significant, language. The inference from Baron Jomini's words is obvious. They contained a veiled programme of the future. "All the territory beyond the Caspian!" Why, that could be made to cover India!

There is still more of that scoffing manner in the report of Baron Jomini's answer. The English ambassador wrote:

"His Excellency said that their farthest point *now* was Askabad, but that General Skobelev had *discovered some very fertile country farther south*, where a complete state of disorder existed; that there was *Sarakhs* also to be considered, and whether it was Persian or not remained to be verified. If Persian, that then it would remain so; but if not, that it would then be necessary to establish some regular form of government *there, as elsewhere*; and that the frontier negotiations would probably *extend to territory beyond the Atrek as far as the confines of Khorassan*, over which Baron Jomini to-day threw doubts as to the sovereignty of the Shah of Persia being more than nominal."

Here the intended aggression in the direction of Persia was clearly foreshadowed.

Another specimen of Muscovite ironical treatment of the vital interests of England is to be found in the previous "Memorandum of a Confidential Conversation of Count Schuwaloff with Lord Derby" (June 8, 1877). When that Memorandum came to light, it was asserted that the Russian ambassador had given "categorical assurances" of a satisfactory character. Now look at the text of those satisfactory assurances! A child might have

seen through the hollowness of the pledge. This is what Count Schuwaloff said:

"England appears to fear lest the spreading, or consequences, of the war (of Russia against Turkey in 1877-78) should lead us to threaten Bassorah and the Persian Gulf. It is not at all to our interest to trouble England in her Indian possessions, or, consequently, in her communications with them. The war which is *at present* going on does not demand it; for its objects are clearly defined, and matters would be *complicated rather than simplified by so vast an extension of the struggle.*"

Here I may remark that, in the English version of this conversation, the expression "at present," which I have put in italics, is rendered by "actually." It is evidently a wrong translation of the French "*actuellement*," which does not mean "actually," but "at present," or "just now."

In other words, what Schuwaloff had in his mind, or up his sleeve, was this: "We must settle Turkey first. After her power is broken, then, and then only, we may trouble England as regards her Indian possessions. Not before; or else England might make common cause with Turkey."

It pleases Russian diplomacy enormously to give such categorical assurances of a satisfactory character, and at the same time to make, in sarcastic phrases, a hint as to its future intentions, which afterwards would enable it even to claim for itself a character of consistent truthfulness.

V.

However, it is not always by veiled sarcasm that the Government of St. Petersburg gets the better of a Power it has to reckon with. On other occasions—and they are by far the more frequent ones—downright deception, by falsely given pledges, is practised without compunction.

A quotation from a despatch of Lord Granville to Lord Loftus, of January 8th, 1873, may here be of use. It contains an early instance of a perfect series of wilful deceptions concerning Russia's gradual march from the Caspian, through the once independent Khanates of Central Asia, to the very confines of, nay, even into, Afghanistan, the bulwark of India.

This is what Lord Granville wrote:

"Count Schuwaloff, a statesman enjoying the full confidence of the Emperor of Russia, confirmed the fact that it was by the Emperor's de-

sire that he sought a personal interview with me. It had caused great surprise to his Imperial Majesty to learn from various sources that a certain amount of excitement and susceptibility had been caused in the public mind of this country on account of questions connected with Central Asia. With regard to the expedition to Khiva, to give an idea of its character, it was sufficient to say that it would consist of four and a half battalions. *Not only was it far from the intention of the Emperor to take possession of Khiva, but positive orders had been prepared to prevent it.* He gave me most decided warrant that I might give positive assurances to Parliament on the matter."

Earl Granville acted on this warrant in Parliament. Then His Majesty Alexander II. quietly annexed Khiva.

Similar pledges, one after the other, were given in the case of Merv, Sarakhs, Afghanistan—in one instance even on an Imperial word of honor to the English nation and to Queen Victoria in person. They were all openly broken. These records of violated pledges look to-day like the overthrown mile-stones of Muscovite progress towards India.

Can we wonder that Prince Dolgorukoff, a moderate constitutionalist, should have written, when living abroad in 1860, the following words in his book, "The Truth about Russia."

"Russia has, from the time of the Mongol invasion, in the thirteenth century, down to our days, been nothing but an immense pyramid of oppression. In this vast edifice, slavish subjection and arbitrary force reign from the bottom to the top; and from top to bottom there is developed, in formidable proportions, the *official lie, the lie erected into a political institution*. . . . This despotism, hideous in itself, exercises an eminently deleterious influence. It dries up noble and elevated sentiments; it degrades the soul; it corrupts, perverts, and lowers the character, even more among those who exercise that despotism than among its victims."

It will be useful, here, to refer to the secret convention between the Russian Government and Shir Ali, of Afghanistan.

Since 1869, there has been no lack of the customary Russian "assurances" in regard to Afghanistan. One of them dates back to the early seventies. It runs thus:

"The idea expressed by Lord Clarendon, of keeping a zone between the possessions of the two Empires in Asia, to preserve them from any contact, has been always shared by our august Master. You may assure Lord Clarendon that nothing could better suit the views of the Emperor" (Alexander II.).

Again:

"His Imperial Majesty looks upon Afghanistan as completely outside the sphere within which Russia may be called upon to exercise her influence. *No intervention or interference whatever, opposed to the independence of that State, enters into his calculations.*"

How was this pledge kept? Only a few years later, the same imperial Majesty entered, through a secret envoy, into negotiations with the Ameer Shir Ali. Their purport is contained in a "Confidential News Letter from the Government Agent at Peshawur," dated June 18th, 1878, and printed in a Blue Book.

The Ameer was asked to allow the location of Russian Agents at Kabul and other places; to accord permission for the quartering of Russian troops in Afghanistan; to let roads be constructed by the Russian Government from Samarkand to Kabul, from Kabul to Herat, from Herat to Kandahar; to allow passage, when necessity arose, by routes it may be desirable to follow, to *Russian troops proceeding to India*; to set up telegraph wires wherever Russian troops or agents were to be stationed; and to furnish supplies to the Russian troops on payment, if it became desirable that the Russian Government should send an expedition to *wage war in India*. On these conditions, the Russian Government would allow the continuance of the administration of Afghanistan to the representatives, successors, and heirs of the Ameer.

The detection of this enormous intrigue finally led to the fall of Shir Ali. The only man to whom I have recently spoken about the occurrence, who at once caught up the allusion, was the young Chief Secretary of the late Ameer, Abdur Rahman, during his stay in England. He knew every detail.

Having been foiled, at the time mentioned, through the discovery of these secret negotiations, Russia, nevertheless, made a new attempt only a few years afterwards, in 1885. This time, she contrived even to tear away, and to retain, a portion of Abdur Rahman's dominions. She did so after having consented to a Frontier Commission, to which the English General Lumsden was appointed as a delegate. When he arrived, he was driven away by a Cossack troop! All this was evidently done with the fell purpose of humiliating England, and so impressing the various and somewhat discordant races that dwell within the "bulwark of India" with the rising power of Czardom.

KARL BLIND.